

Introduction

In 2011, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo created ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to advance the administration's efforts to improve New York's business climate and expand economic growth.

New York State drives economic growth by making investments that enforce four interconnecting strategies:

- **Placemaking** - The notion that where investment occurs matters. In order to attract a talented workforce, our built environment must emphasize creating accessible job centers, sustainable infrastructure, and livable communities.
- **Workforce** - The belief that people drive the economy. Targeted job training and education ensures that jobs in high-paying, in-demand, tradeable sectors are filled in an equitable way.
- **Tradeable Sectors** - The industries New York State is targeting to increase export based employment opportunities. They are the industry sectors that are part of a global market like manufacturing, agricultural products, and energy.
- **Innovation** - The strategy of investing in and creating synergies between research and commercialization to drive the economy forward.

Regional Councils are asked to address statewide priorities in ways uniquely tailored to their region which complement the regional vision. The REDCs developed strategic plans with input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders taking into account the unique strengths and weaknesses of each region. The strategic plans serve as a road map, guiding each region's efforts to stimulate economic growth. Each region's strategic plan, implementation agenda and progress reports can be found online at www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov

For Round IX, Regional Councils will once again focus on the implementation of each region's strategic plan, and continue to identify and invest in significant economic development projects. The Governor has directed over \$750 million in State resources to be made available in 2019 to support the economic development priorities of the regions and spur job creation across the state, including \$225 million in competitive funds from Empire State Development.

In 2019, REDCs will advance projects and other actions identified for implementation and identify new strategies, as appropriate, to pursue. The Regional Councils are having a positive impact on economic development, helping to bring unemployment levels down through the creation and retention of thousands of jobs.

During Round IX, in addition to the strategies established in their regional strategic economic development plans, each REDC is asked to focus on priorities outlined in the 2019 REDC Guidebook.

In addition to the \$225 million available for the competitive aspect of the Regional Council process, over \$525 million will be available to applicants through the CFA from various State agencies to support economic development projects that align with REDC strategic plans.

This year, there are over 30 programs available through 10 state agencies, including Empire State Development; NYS Canal Corporation; NYS Energy Research and Development Authority; Environmental Facilities Corporation; Homes and Community Renewal; New York Power Authority; Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; Department of State; Department of Environmental Conservation, and Council on the Arts. In an effort to provide the most appropriate

state resources through this process, participating agencies will be able to review and potentially provide funding to a project that did not specifically apply to that program, if the materials submitted at time of application satisfy the requirements for that program and allow for fair review under the circumstances. In addition, all programs contained in this document will use regional distribution standards to ensure projects are funded throughout the state.

Please be advised that all CFA grants are subject to the New York State Executive Law Article 15-A which requires, where applicable, the establishment of 30% minority-and women-owned business enterprises ("M/WBE") contract goals.

In 2014, the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act was signed into law. The new law created the Division of Service-Disabled Veterans' Business Development in Office of General Services to certify, promote and encourage economic development among disabled veterans throughout the state. Project applicants are urged to work with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs) and a directory can be found at <https://ogs.ny.gov/Veterans>.

This document outlines information about each agency's grant programs, including eligibility, scoring criteria, applicant requirements, and agency contact information.

Empire State Development

Empire State Development Grant Funds

Funding Available: Up to \$150 million

DESCRIPTION:

ESD has \$150 million of capital grant funding from the Regional Council Capital Fund available for the State's Regional Economic Development Council Initiative, which helps drive regional and local economic development across New York State in cooperation with ten Regional Economic Development Councils ("Regional Councils").

Capital grant funding is available for capital-based economic development projects intended to create or retain jobs; prevent, reduce or eliminate unemployment and underemployment; and/or increase business or economic activity in a community or Region.

Grant funding will be allocated among the ten regions, each represented by a Regional Council. Funding decisions will be based on each Regional Council's development and implementation of a five-year strategic plan that sets out a comprehensive vision for economic development and specific strategies to implement that vision, coupled with New York State's economic growth priorities. Funding will be allocated to projects, including priority projects identified by the Regional Councils, identified as significant, regionally supported and capable of stimulating economic investment.

In addition, special consideration shall be given to projects supporting the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Strategic Community Investment, Improving Access to Child Care, and Environmental Justice.

Funding will be awarded by the New York State Urban Development Corporation (d/b/a Empire State Development) at its discretion.

ELIGIBLE TYPES OF APPLICANTS:

Eligible Applicants include but are not limited to: for-profit businesses, not-for-profit corporations*, business improvement districts, local development corporations, public benefit corporations (including industrial development agencies), economic development organizations, research and academic institutions, incubators, technology parks, municipalities, counties, regional planning councils, tourist attractions and community facilities.

* If awarded funding, prior to ESD Directors' approval and execution of a contract with ESD, a not-for-profit corporation must be registered and up-to-date with filings with the New York State Office of the Attorney General's Charities Bureau and the New York State Office of the State Comptroller's VendRep System and must be prequalified in the New York State Grants Gateway.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES / PROGRAM BENEFIT REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants applying for ESD Grant Funds should clearly describe the scope and budget for the "project" for which funds are being requested. For example, an Applicant may be planning a larger project that would include multiple phases, such as in the case of a major infrastructure project or redevelopment of a specific geographic area. However, the "project" for which funds are being requested via the CFA might consist of only one phase of the larger project. In such situations, the request for ESD Grant funds should be specific to the phase, NOT the overall multi-phase project.

Assistance generally falls into three categories:

1. Strategic Community Development Investment:

Grant funds may be used to finance strategic community development investments within a downtown, mixed-use commercial district in order to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses, thereby fostering further investment. Strategic community development investments include but are not limited to capital expenditures for infrastructure including transportation, parking garages, water and sewer, communication, and energy generation and distribution. Applicants must demonstrate how the project will result in a benefit to the viability of the area it is located in and how it will lead to increased economic activity. Applicants that propose a project within a specific area where there are other proposed or ongoing projects may be looked upon favorably as a way to redevelop a specific area as opposed to standalone projects without other investments within an area.

Strategic community development investment projects that are able to provide job commitments will be viewed favorably. It is important, however, to note that (1) few strategic community development investment projects are anticipated to be able to provide job commitments and (2) if the employer will be an entity other than the Applicant, a third party guarantee of the Applicant's job commitment must be provided by the prospective employer and both the prospective employer and the third party guarantor must be found by ESD to be creditworthy.

Strategic community development investment projects may also include planning or feasibility studies relating to a specific capital project, site, or downtown, mixed-use district.

2. Business Investment:

Business investments are capital expenditures that facilitate an employer's ability to create new jobs in New York State or to retain jobs that are otherwise in jeopardy. Five-year job commitments will be required of all award recipients because it is by underwriting these job commitments that ESD is best able to forecast the economic benefits of providing assistance to any particular project. Applicants will therefore be required to commit to the number of jobs at risk (of relocation or loss) that will be retained by the proposed project, the number of net new full-time jobs that will be created by the project, and the average salaries of each. Failure to achieve or maintain these employment commitments will subject a funding recipient to potential recapture of assistance.

3. Economic Growth Investment:

An Economic Growth Investment initiative fosters economic growth through cultural activity, higher education activity, agribusiness initiatives, other local or regional initiatives, planning or feasibility studies relating to a specific capital project or site, improvements to facilities in highly distressed areas, commercial revitalization activities in central business districts or commercial strips, or other types of projects that may not have direct job creation goals. Economic Growth Investment projects that are able to provide direct job commitments will be viewed favorably.

GRANT FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR:

- Acquisition of land, buildings, machinery and/or equipment;
- Demolition and environmental remediation;
- New construction, renovation or leasehold improvements;
- Acquisition of furniture and fixtures;
- Soft costs of up to twenty-five percent (25%) of total project costs; and
- Planning and feasibility studies related to a specific capital project or site.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

The following types of expenses may be included in budgets but shall not be eligible for reimbursement by grant funds:

- Developer fees;
- Training;
- Residential development, although program funds may only be used for the commercial component of a mixed-use project; and
- Block grant projects or revolving loan funds

PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants must complete and submit a Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) for review by ESD and the Regional Council for the region in which the proposed project is located.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS:

Because awards are offered as an incentive to undertake a project, the project should not begin, and expenses should not be incurred, before funding awards have been announced. Expenses incurred prior to submission of a CFA should not be included in CFA project budgets, nor should expenses that will be incurred after submission of a CFA but prior to an award announcement.

The amount of an award from ESD is based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, the project's alignment with the state and regional priorities, as well as the potential for direct and indirect job creation, direct and indirect fiscal benefit to the state and local governments, overall economic activity, community development and private investment. Generally, applicants should not apply for, nor will be considered for, more than twenty percent (20%) of the financing for any particular project based on the eligible total project cost. Typically, awards will be less than 20% of the eligible total project cost and the likelihood of winning an award improves as the percentage of ESD assistance is reduced and private investment or other sources are better leveraged. Exceptions to this limit may be made at the sole discretion of ESD in cases where it is found that a project or projects will have an unusual or extraordinary regional or statewide impact.

ESD requires that the Applicant contribute a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the total project cost in the form of equity contributed after the Applicant's acceptance of ESD's incentive proposal. Equity is defined as cash injected into the project by the Applicant or by investors and should be auditable through the Applicant's financial statements or accounts, if so requested by ESD. Equity cannot be borrowed money secured by the assets in the project or grants from a government source.

The Applicant must always disclose whether it is pursuing or intends to pursue multiple ESD funding sources, including grants, loans and tax incentives.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

In addition to the criteria noted below, ESD shall have the discretion to consider additional factors in determining the relative merits of projects.

Vision and Regional Economic Development Strategies:

- The overall economic impact that the project identified in the application will have on a region, including, but not limited to, the amount of capital investment and the level of increased economic activity from the proposed capital investment;
- The economic and community benefit to the viability of the area in which the project is located in;
- The number and impact of any direct or indirect jobs that will be created;
- The number of new jobs created and/or at-risk jobs that will be retained;
- The likelihood that the project identified in the application would be located outside of New York State or would not occur in New York State but for the availability of state or local incentives.

Public/Stakeholders:

- Whether the project has demonstrated support from local government and private sector leaders in the locality and the region where the project will be located;
- Whether the project will have a significant regional impact or is likely to increase the subject community's economic and social viability and vitality; and
- The degree of economic distress in the area where the Applicant will locate the project identified in its application, including downtown revitalization and brownfield areas.

Implementation:

- The degree of project readiness and likelihood of completion, including, where applicable for real estate development projects, if there are identified tenants for a completed project; and
- The degree of the Applicant's financial viability and strength of financials/operating history/ESD credit score.

Leveraged Resources:

- The amount of private financing leveraged; and
- The amount of public financing leveraged.

Performance Measures:

- The estimated return on investment that the project identified in the application will provide to New York State;
- For downtown areas, whether or not the project concerns the preservation of the architectural character of a building or neighborhood;
- Whether, where applicable, there are identified tenants for a completed project;
- The degree to which the project supports the principals of smart growth, energy-efficiency (including but not limited to, the reduction of greenhouse gas and emissions and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design [LEED] green building rating system for the project identified in its application), and sustainable development; and
- The degree to which the project identified in the application supports New York State minority- and women-owned business enterprises.

Significant Statewide Programs:

- Proposed projects that are part of the following initiatives will be looked upon favorably:

Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Strategic Community Investment

Priority consideration will be given to proposals which demonstrate they will advance downtown revitalization and strategic place making through transformative housing, economic development, transportation and community projects that will attract and retain residents, visitors and businesses - creating dynamic neighborhoods where tomorrow's workforce will want to live, work, and raise a family. Projects should reflect the general principles of smart growth and sustainable development.

Improving Access to Child Care

Despite record investments in child care, many New Yorkers still struggle to access high quality child care. This issue forces families to choose between quality child care and employment or places families in the position to use unlicensed child care providers. Applicants should provide any information about their project that works to improve access to child care.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice means the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. As we transition to a greener

economy, it is imperative that no subset of the population be marginalized or left behind. Applicants should provide any information about how their project actively works to address these issues.

AWARD CRITERIA DETAILS:

- Notice of a funding award will be given in the form of an incentive proposal outlining the terms of the proposed assistance. The award is subject to approval of the ESD Directors and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Project funding may only be used for expenses incurred after the date that notice of the funding award is given. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review and countersign ESD's incentive proposal prior to starting the project.
- All Applicants will be requested to certify and agree that any decrease in the scope of work described in the Applicant's final CFA submission including, but not limited to, total project costs, jobs retained, and jobs created, may result in ESD's reduction of the award, in ESD's sole discretion, in an amount proportionate to any such decrease.
- All Applicants will be requested to certify and agree that any expansion of the scope of work described in the Applicant's final CFA submission including, but not limited to, total project costs, jobs retained, and jobs created, will not result in the increase of the award by ESD.
- Please note that awarded grants are transferable at the sole discretion of ESD.
- The essential terms for the disbursement of assistance are included in the incentive proposal. Although funding is offered prior to project commencement as an inducement to undertake the project, funds are disbursed in arrears, as reimbursement for eligible project expenditures.
- Grant funds will be subject to pro rata recapture if property is sold within 5 years of disbursement of funds.
- It is expected the project will proceed in the time frame set forth by the Applicant. If the implementation of a project fails to proceed as planned and is delayed for a significant period of time and there is, in the exclusive judgment of ESD, doubt as to its viability, ESD reserves the right to cancel its funding commitment to such project. If awarded, the Incentive Proposal expires two years from the date of acceptance by the Recipient. ESD reserves the right to require Recipient to provide any additional information and/or documentation ESD deems necessary and terminate the project at any point if the applicant fails to provide such documentation in a timely manner.
- For Business Investment projects, partial funding is disbursed upon project completion and interim job creation/retention milestones, with additional funding disbursed upon achievement of job creation/retention milestones. For Infrastructure Investment and Economic Growth Investment projects, funding typically is disbursed upon project completion.
- Projects generally are presented to the ESD Directors once all project expenditures have been undertaken and disbursement of ESD assistance is sought.
- All required public approvals must be in place prior to the start of construction and approval by the ESD Directors, including State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, if applicable. Physical work on an ESD-funded project

may not be started prior to the completion of any necessary environmental, historic and/or smart growth review.

- For projects with job creation and/or retention, job numbers will be verified using the employer's NY-45 and NY-45 ATT and/or payroll reports prior to disbursement of funds and annually thereafter through the required reporting period.
- In accordance with the requirements of Article 15-A of the New York State Executive Law: Participation By Minority Group Members and Women With Respect To State Contracts, projects awarded funding shall be reviewed by ESD's Office of Contractor and Supplier Diversity, which will set business and participation goals for minorities and women. Such goals shall typically be included in the incentive proposal.

Please note that ESD's agency-wide MWBE utilization goal is 30%. Each project will be assigned an individual contract-specific goal, which may be higher or lower than 30%. Should an Applicant receive a funding award, the Applicant shall be required to use good faith efforts to achieve the prescribed MWBE goals assigned to this project. Applicants must maintain such records and take such actions necessary to demonstrate such compliance. Failure to achieve the specified MWBE goal may result in award reduction.

- In 2014, the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act was signed into law. The new law created the Division of Service-Disabled Veterans' Business Development in Office of General Services to certify, promote and encourage economic development among disabled veterans throughout the state. Project Applicants are urged to work with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs) and a directory can be found at <https://ogs.ny.gov/Veterans>.
- In accordance with State law, after approval by the ESD Directors, a public hearing will be required if the project involves the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, alteration or improvement of any property. ESD will schedule a public hearing in accordance with the *New York State Urban Development Corporation Act* ("UDC Act") and will take such further action as may be required by the UDC Act and other applicable law and regulations. The ESD Directors must reconsider the matter if any negative testimony is received at the public hearing. (Generally, this hearing occurs the month after the Directors' initial approval). Approval by the Public Authorities Control Board ("PACB"), New York State Comptroller ("OSC") and the New York State Attorney General ("AG") may then be required. Following approval by the ESD Directors and PACB, OSC and AG approval, if required, the documents for processing the grant award will be prepared by ESD. Notwithstanding the process outlined above, no project shall be funded if sufficient resources are not received by ESD for such project.
- A \$250 Application Fee, payable when funding is documented in an Incentive Proposal, and a one percent (1%) non-reimbursable commitment fee based on the grant amount awarded will be assessed to all awardees. The commitment fee will be due when the Applicant executes documents required for processing the award, after approval by the ESD Directors. The Applicant will be obligated to pay for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by ESD in connection with the project, including, but not limited to, expenses related to attorney fees, appraisals, surveys, title insurance, credit searches, filing fees, public hearing expenses and other requirements deemed appropriate by ESD.
- Grant funds originally awarded to projects that have since been cancelled or terminated will be repurposed for economic development projects by ESD at its discretion in consultation with the REDCs.

- Projects having a hotel as a principal function will be required to demonstrate compliance with Section 2879-b of Public Authorities Law regarding labor peace if funding is awarded. Public Authorities Law Section 2879-b prohibits public authorities from providing financing for any project that includes, as one of the principal functions, a hotel with more than fifteen employees unless a labor peace agreement (“LPA”) is entered into with a labor organization representing hotel or convention center employees in the State, for a period of at least five years. An LPA is an agreement between the project developer (or its contractors) and a labor organization prohibiting the labor organization and its members from engaging in labor activities that disrupt the hotel’s operations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For more information, eligible Applicants should contact the local Empire State Development Regional Office. A complete list of the ESD Regional Offices can be found at <http://esd.ny.gov/RegionalOverviews.html>